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A SYMPOSIUM

ON THE VALUE OF HUMANISTIC, PARTICULARLY CLASSICAL,
STUDIES: THE CLASSICS AND THE NEW EDUCATION¹

I. THE CLASSICS IN EUROPEAN EDUCATION

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The ancient classics, the literature of Greece and Rome, were regarded as a vital constituent of education from the moment when they were produced. Studied with devotion as the immortal memorials of a great past, they have led, when rightly followed, to new and high achievement in the present. With this consideration as a clue, let us travel on as briskly as the moments at our disposal require down the centuries of European history.

I know not what Homer studied when he went to school—for may we not, encouraged by recent discussions, not only think of Homer in personal terms, but even boldly picture him as a schoolboy once upon a time?—I know not what Homer studied;

¹ Part of the program of the Michigan Schoolmasters' Club at Ann Arbor, Michigan, March 31, 1910. Through the kind assistance of the Board of Regents of the University of Michigan it has been possible to secure some reprints of this symposium for distribution. Those desiring a copy may address (inclosing a two-cent stamp for postage) Mr. Louis P. Jocelyn, secretary Michigan Schoolmasters' Club, South Division Street, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

The previous symposiums of this series were as follows:

I. "The Value of Humanistic, Particularly Classical, Studies as a Preparation for the Study of Medicine and Engineering," published in the *School Review*, XIV (1906), 389-414; translated into German by Professor Von

but everybody knows that Homer was part and parcel of the education of a great age that came after him, the age of Periclean Greece. In that age, moreover, we see that twofold impulse of the human spirit which the study of classical literature normally inspires—reverence for the past, and the passionate desire to act worthily in the present. Aeschylus, who described his dramas as mere slices from the Homeric feast, prepared for his own times, as Herder remarked, another kind of banquet. The Alexandrian Age, which created canonical lists of the best authors, among whom Aeschylus now took his place, was also an age of startling innovations in philosophy and politics; in literature, much pondering of Homer led, not to remote and archaistic fancies, but to the translation of heroic types into contemporary terms. Then came the Romans, not an alien race with a hybrid culture, save in the sense that all culture is hybrid, but creators of another great period in the development of antiquity, a period less novel in the invention of literary forms, but fertile and to the highest degree original in the adaptation of the old. Rome's innovations in human history are conspicuous enough; they followed naturally from a loyal consecration to the past. Beginning with a devotion to their own heroic past, they connected this past deliberately with the glories of Greek literature and history, when once that potent influence had made its presence felt. Think for a moment of these typical Romans, and the double outlook on the past and on the present, conspicuous in

Arnim, of the University of Vienna, and published, with an introduction by Dr. S. Frankfurter, under the title of "Der Wert des Humanismus, insbesondere der klassischen Studien als Vorbereitung für das Studium der Medizin und der Ingenieurkunde vom Standpunkte der Berufe" (4. Heft, Mitteilungen des Vereins der Freunde des humanistischen Gymnasiums, Vienna and Leipzig, 1907).

II. "The Value of Humanistic Studies as a Preparation for the Study of Law," *School Review*, XV (1907), 409-35.

III. "The Value of Humanistic, Particularly Classical, Studies as a Preparation for the Study of Theology, from the Point of View of the Profession," *School Review*, XVI (1908), 370-90, 533-37, and 561-79.

IV. "The Value of Humanistic, Particularly Classical, Studies as a Training for Men of Affairs," *School Review*, XVII (1909), 369-403.

A few reprints of Nos. III and IV are still to be had. The reprints of Nos. I and II are exhausted.

their lives and works: Ennius, who refashioned Latin verse in the new Grecian measure, that in this verse he might immortalize the history of his country; Cicero, reverent student of the ancient poetry of Ennius and leader of his times in the year 63; Horace, who bids the learner

Thumb Greek classics night and day

and, thanks to such a training, arraigns the age in a splendid series of Alcaean odes. Poets who know their own day only are the "singers of Euphorion," in Cicero's contemptuous phrase. Young Virgil, perhaps included in that phrase, has so little fame from his early poems, which bear the mark of Euphorion, that until recently nobody has believed he could have written them. Virgil's great message to his generation, and to ours, came in a poem which reveals an intense study of his country's past and an intense study of Homer and Greek tragedy.

I have tarried a moment with the ancients, instead of beginning much later in the history of Europe, expressly to suggest that the best things in ancient literature were not written solely from the artistic but often from the social motive as well. Letters, and, originally, men of letters, were not sundered from public life, but actively contributed to it. If the classics have molded later history, it is not merely because of their great qualities as literature, but because they are involved in the history of their own times and because they enshrine the ideals of a liberal and four-square education, such as their authors possessed. This is a matter that will become obvious, in a moment, when we consider the educational program of Italian humanism.

But first we must quickly traverse the intervening ages—Middle Ages, but not wholly dark—which a new system of education controlled. It is a mistake to suppose that the Christian church was hostile to pagan culture; on the contrary, after a brief season of combat and readjustment, the old learning was appropriated for a new purpose. But the purpose was new. Whereas to Cicero and Quintilian the goal of education was *eloquentia*, the art of expression and its application to the business of state, the Christian monastery removed from the world and prescribed hours of silence. Ill would the sophist Polemo

have fared there, who was buried before the breath left his body, that he might not be seen above ground with mouth shut. The Christian church maintained both systems of education for some time, but monasticism gained the day and was the main strength of education till later in the Middle Ages the university came. Now the classics did not perish under the new régime; in fact we can thank the monastery for preserving them for us. They constituted the first step in education, the "Human Readings," as Cassiodorus called them, to be succeeded by "Divine Readings" later. More than that, in the revival of learning under Charlemagne, and later at the school of Chartres, the ancient idea came again to the front. John of Salisbury in the twelfth century had a great deal to say about *eloquentia*, while Hildebert of Tours wrote epigrams delightfully antique, which could deceive the very elect—that is, certain modern editors of the *Anthologia Latina*. Church, state, and learning were more intimately associated than before. The university, too, though its interests were philosophical rather than humanistic, ultimately served the cause of humanism by its determination to recover certain Greek writings—the writings of Aristotle. Men of the Middle Ages did not differ radically from those of succeeding centuries in their attitude toward the classics. Humanism and philosophy had their battles in that period as in every period, but the importance of classical culture for education was in general unquestioned. The great and striking difference lay in the amount of classical culture available. The division of the empire into an East and a West effected curious results in civilization. Byzantium, after dark ages of its own, settled down to an eminently respectable scholarship which created little in literature or thought. It treasured the Greek authors but forgot the Roman. When the monk Maximus Planudes at the end of the thirteenth century translated various Latin authors into Greek, he selected those most in vogue in the West at that time—Ovid, Boethius, Augustine, Donatus, Dionysius Cato; there was evidently no separate tradition of Latin literature at Byzantium. In the West, similarly, the stream of Greek was trickling feebly; the knowledge of the language had not completely disappeared, and

technical writers like Aristotle and the author of the Celestial Hierarchy were directly introduced, but the writers typical to us of the Hellenic genius were none of them known. Now a world without Homer, the Attic drama, Thucydides, Herodotus, Demosthenes, Theocritus, a world without the real Plato, is bound to be a very different world from our own. Not that this loss which befell the Occident was ultimately a calamity. The very isolation of the Roman spirit permitted its most triumphant expression in Dante, for whose poetry we should willingly forego whatever a combined East and West might have achieved.

To see how the mediaeval imagination was still fixed faithfully upon antiquity, though less able than before to understand its meaning, we turn to Dante, who mirrors truly the vital sentiments of his times. Many a reader has felt the beauty of that scene in the Purgatorio, where Dante and Beatrice come upon a troop who sing:

*Benedictus qui venis,
E fior gittando di sopra e dintorno,
Manibus o date lilia plenis.*

Christian liturgy and pagan poetry, which to some could sound only a discord, blend harmoniously here. But for a more striking instance still I turn to Dante's seventh letter, addressed to Henry VII of Germany in 1311. In this letter Dante speaks of "the new hope of a better age" which "flashed upon Latium" when that monarch came down into Italy. "Then many a one, anticipating in his joy the wishes of his heart, sang with Maro of the kingdom of Saturn and of the returning Virgin." But since this sun of their hopes seems to tarry, as though bidden to stand by a second Joshua, Italy is tempted to cry: "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" Dante himself has firm faith in the "minister of God" and "the promoter of Roman glory," but wonders still why he can delay, apparently believing that the boundaries of Rome end at Liguria. But the real Rome "scarce deigneth to be bounded by the barren wave of ocean. For it is written for us

Nascetur pulchra Troianus origine Caesar
Imperium Oceano, famam qui terminet astris."

Had not the edict "that all the world should be taxed" issued from the "council chamber of the most righteous principedom," the Son of God would not have "chosen that time to be born of a Virgin." So let the emperor not delay, but "let that word of Curio to Caesar ring forth once more—

Dum trepidant nullo firmatae robore partes,
Tolle moras; semper nocuit differre paratis;
Par labor atque metus pretio maiore petuntur.

Let that voice of the chider ring forth from the clouds once more against Aeneas—

Si te nulla movet tantarum gloria rerum
Ascanium surgentem et spes heredis Iuli
Respice. . . .

For John, thy royal first-born is for us a second Ascanius, who, following in the footprints of his great sire, shall rage like a lion all around against every Turnus, and shall be gentle as a lamb toward the Latins." Dante then warns the emperor by the example of David, whom Samuel rebuked for sparing "the sinners of Amalek." He warns him by the example of Hercules, for there are many heads of the Italian hydra, and if Cremona is lopped off Brescia and Pavia will remain. He must strike at the viper itself, even Florence, who is that "foul and impious Myrrha that burns for the embraces of her father Cinyras," "that passionate Amata who rejected the wedlock decreed by fate," thus resisting "the ordinance of God" and worshiping "the idol of her proper will." So come, "thou lofty scion of Jesse. Take to thee confidence from the eyes of the Lord God of Sabaoth and lay this Goliath low with the sling of thy wisdom and the stone of thy strength."

Surely for this act of public service—the greatest, Dante doubtless thought, that he could render his country—the authority of Virgil and Lucan and Ovid seems well-nigh as efficient as that of scripture itself. May we not say that for Dante, as truly as for any later humanist, the study of the ancients had an immediate bearing upon the problems of the day?

When Dante had finished his work it was time for a new epoch. Scholasticism had run its course. After so minute and comprehensive a vision of the kingdom of this world and the next as St. Thomas records, some sort of protest and readjustment is inevitable if the human sense of wonder is to persist; in a universe where nothing escapes the observer, the observer, as Lucretius knew, will find at last

eadem sunt omnia semper.

So scholasticism declined and a new age came, in which education returned to the methods of antiquity. We need not pause to examine the causes of this event; but its most significant concomitant is the return of Greek literature to the Western World. There is a humorous aspect to the triumphs of the humanists, who "discovered" Latin authors long treasured on monastic shelves. Quintilian, welcomed back with such a furor, had been the patron saint of the school of Chartres. The humanists could rediscover because in the thirteenth century the classical interests of the twelfth had yielded to philosophy, and in the fourteenth, monastic discipline and the monastic library had lapsed into decay. But I would not belittle the importance of what to the contemporaries of Poggio were certainly discoveries. For the thirst for discoveries led also to the more careful study of the authors existing. Petrarch initiated the movement; though curiously mediaeval in some respects, he deserves his title of the first modern man, and this because of his passion for antiquity. His great service is not so much the discovery of Cicero's letters as the exaltation of Ciceronian ideas, which were from that time on the guiding principle of humanistic education. Petrarch's craving for Homer, too, ill satisfied by the wretched translation which his teacher made, led the age to demand all Greek literature again. Work after work was won back; practically all the authors that we have today were recovered before the fall of Constantinople in 1453, which date surely does not mark the beginning of the Renaissance. What wonder if the age, intoxicated by the new draught, indulged itself in various excesses? What wonder, too, if at first the habits of centuries prevented men from rightly valuing

their new treasures, so that throughout the Renaissance the doctrine prevailed that the greater literature was the Latin? The Greek authors had at any rate returned, and civilization could not remain as before.

For a glimpse into the new school of the humanists after Greek had its sure place there, we can do no better than open a little book by Battista Guarino, *De Ordine Docendi et Studendi*, published in 1459. Battista Guarino is less celebrated than his father, and distinctly less celebrated than Vittorino de Feltre, the greatest teacher of the Renaissance. The curriculum at this school is narrower than that of Vergerio or Aeneas Sylvius; for this reason it is a safer guide to the average practice of the day. Guarino restricts the disciplines to ancient literature and history, Greek and Latin; logic and ethics, for instance, are introduced not as independent studies, but because they are necessary for the explanation of Cicero. This program sounds rather barren, but we must study it more deeply to see what it means. Literature involves grammar, of course, and prosody, and likewise composition in both prose and verse. The works of Virgil should be learned by heart, for "in this way the flow of the hexameter, not less than the quantity of individual syllables, is impressed on the ear, and insensibly molds the taste." Nor should the contents of poetry be neglected. Its fictions have moral as well as artistic value. They exhibit the realities of our own life under the form of imaginary persons and situations; Cicero's authority is quoted for this sentiment, and St. Jerome is cited to good purpose. The lessons of history, too, are of great value. By it, Guarino states, the student will learn "to understand the manners, laws, and institutions of different types of nations, and will examine the varying fortunes of individual and states, the sources of their success and failure, their strength and their weakness. Not only is such knowledge of interest in daily intercourse, but it is of practical value in the ordering of affairs." Now though logic and ethics may have been an aside, they involved the direct study of Aristotle and Plato. We find other asides, too—astronomy, and geography, and Roman Law, and the writers on those subjects.

Moreover, independent reading is a vital part of the plan, and among authors suggested as appropriate for such reading are St. Augustine, Aulus Gellius, Macrobius, the elder Pliny, "whose Natural History is indeed as wide as nature herself." The pupil is bidden to practice his memory by going over at the end of each day what he has just learned; he is told to do much reading aloud, since this will give him the confidence which the public speaker needs. Throughout these instructions there is constant reference to the moral goal of education. "In purity of grace and style," Guarino affirms, "in worthy deeds worthily presented, in noble thoughts nobly said,—in all these, and not in one alone, the learner finds the nourishment of his mind and spirit." But literature is not merely moral; it trains the dramatic imagination. "In this way," he continues, "we are not disturbed by the impieties, cruelties, horrors, which we find there; we judge these things simply by their congruity to the characters and situations described. We criticise the artist, not the moralist." The ultimate secret of this method is its foundation in personality, and humanity. "Finally," he declares, "through books and books alone, will your converse be with the best and greatest, nay even with the mighty dead themselves. . . . To man only is given the desire to learn. Hence what the Greeks called *παιδεία* we call *studia humanitatis*. For learning and virtue are peculiar to man; therefore our forefathers called them 'humanitas,' the pursuits, the activities proper to mankind. And no branch of knowledge embraces so wide a range of subjects as that learning which I have now attempted to describe."

Nothing but Greek and Latin. Under Guarino's cultivation, these ancient roots branch out as widely as the flower in the crannied wall. These studies of antiquity educate the whole man, moral, aesthetic, intellectual; they train him to independent thinking, for the authors are but the starting-point; they inculcate reverence for the past; they teach its application to the present. Now two historical facts are plain with reference to this program. First, it is simply the ancient method of Cicero and Quintilian all over again. Both authors are constantly cited for principles as well as facts; *virtutis laus omnis in actione*

consistit, said Cicero, and Vittorino echoes the words. Second, it is the basis of every truly humanistic program established from that day to this. Its principles appear in some dozen treatises of the day, and from Italy spread to the North. What I have quoted does not touch all the elements in humanistic education. Science and mathematics received more consideration than one might suppose. Religious training was not neglected, as it is with us; polite demeanor, dress, physical exercise, were all matters for attention. And let me emphasize again the point I would specially make: the twofold character of their education, its reverence for the past and its interest in the present, derives clearly from the ancient prototype.

It is not necessary to quote *in extenso* the leading humanists of the North for proof that the new educational ideals were eagerly appropriated and applied. Rudolphus Agricola in Germany, Vivès in Holland, but originally from Spain, Dorat and the learned Budé in France, diverge in no essential particular from Vittorino. Let Erasmus, the most cosmopolitan man of his day, speak for them all. "The first object of education," he declares, "is to teach the young mind to foster the seeds of piety, the next to love and learn the liberal arts, the third to prepare itself for the duties of life, the fourth, from its earliest years to cultivate civil manners." Erasmus truly represents England, as well as his own land, but a native voice was also heard from our mother-country at that time. I mean not Roger Ascham, who comes later in the sixteenth century, and whose system is a bit lady-like in its painful propriety, but Thomas Elyot, who in his *Book of the Governour* (1531) interpreted Erasmus and Budé to England. The idea that the study of the classics was merely the study of two foreign and ancient tongues would find no favor with him. "Only to possess language," he declared, "is to be a popinjay." Homer holds for him far more than that. "If by reading the sage counsel of Nestor, the subtle persuasions of Ulysses, the compendious gravity of Menelaus, the imperial majesty of Agamemnon, the prowess of Achilles, the valiant courage of Hector, we may apprehend anything whereby our wits may be amended and our personages more apt

to serve our public weal and our prince, what forceth it us though Homer writes leasings?" As with Guarino, the poetic lie has its moral function. Elyot concludes: "I think verily if children were brought up as I have written, and continually were retained in the right study of every philosophy until they passed the age of twenty-one years and then set to the laws of this realm . . . undoubtedly they should become men of so excellent wisdom that throughout the world, men should be found in no common weal more noble counsellors."

These words have the ring of a familiar passage in Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*, concerning the learned governor. "Nay, let a man look into the government of the Bishops of Rome," he remarks, "as by name, into the government of *Pius Quintus*, and *Sextus Quintus*, in our times, who were both at their entrance esteemed but as Pedantical Friars, and he shall find that such Popes do greater things, and proceed upon truer principles of Estate, than those which have ascended to the Papacy from an education and breeding in affairs of Estate and Courts of Princes." Or to translate this into modern terms, let future lawyers take Classics in college, and not confine themselves to Economics.

Need I say that all Bacon's thinking was seasoned through and through with the classics? He was no pedantic advocate, surely no advocate of the Ciceronianist whom he berates as soundly as he does the scholastic. "Then did *Car of Cambridge*, and *Ascham*, with their Lectures and Writings, almost deify *Cicero* and *Demosthenes*, and allure all young men that were studious, into that delicate and polished kind of Learning. Then did *Erasmus* take the occasion to make the scoffing Echo: *Decem annos consumpsi in legendo Cicerone*; and the Echo answered in Greek, "Ὁυε, Asine."

Bacon brings us naturally to Milton, a Puritan and a rebel, who also, thanks to the ancients, could temper his virtue with Epicureanism, and show in his poetry that liturgic reverence for the past which is ingrained in classic literature. Milton writes a brief treatise "Of Education" to his friend Samuel Hartlib, and in it he says: "I call, therefore, a complete and generous

education, that which fits a man to perform justly, skilfully, and magnanimously all the offices, both private and public, of peace and war. And how all this may be done between twelve and one-and-twenty, less time than is now bestowed in pure trifling at grammar and sophistry, is to be thus ordered." Then, outlining his main topics as studies, exercise, and diet, he treats of the first: "First, they should begin with the chief and necessary rules of some good grammar . . . and . . . their speech is to be fashioned to a distinct and clear pronunciation, as near as may be to the Italian, especially in the vowels." He is speaking, of course, of Latin grammar. "For we Englishmen, being far northerly, do not open our mouths in the cold air wide enough to grace a southern tongue, but are observed by all other nations to speak exceedingly close and inward; so that to smatter Latin with an English mouth is as ill a hearing as law French."

He proceeds with a lengthy list of readings in Greek and Latin literature, which soon runs into mathematics and many natural sciences, politics, philosophy, and religion. "And either now or before this," he interposes, "they may have easily learned at any odd hour the Italian tongue." As with Guarino, education was not all done by courses.

Thus far our examination of the history of classical education in Europe has been pleasant enough, at least for those who are favorably disposed toward the classics. We have seen the ancient ideal reintroduced in the Italian Renaissance, disseminated in the northern countries, and established once for all, we should imagine, by mighty thinkers like Bacon and Milton. But no human institution is permanent, and even in the times with which we have been dealing forces were at work which tended to discredit an educational program based on the classics.

One such force was the decay of the method itself. All movements tend eventually to a period of formalism and petrification. Petrification seized the classical program when the limits of good Latin style were restricted to Cicero, and taste in general became puristic. Politian had read sympathetically in the authors of silver Latinity and appropriated their phrases at will, because, he said, he was expressing not them, or Cicero,

or anybody but himself. Bombo shrank from calling deity anything but *dii immortales*, and warned a young friend against too much reading of the New Testament, lest it spoil his Latin style. That was the age, too, when handbooks of imaginative etiquette were compiled to save the poets from mistakes. Lists were furnished of proper epithets for frequent nouns; thus *aer* could be *liquidus* and *igneus* and a few other things, but under no circumstances anything else. Clearly a system which engendered such absurdities was not destined to long life. Two events came to the rescue of humanism. One was its transfer to the other countries, where its vital elements were bound to take hold, and where the absence of patriotic interest left the judgment more free and critical; though France was somewhat bitten with Ciceronianism, though the delicate Ascham approved it, the sturdy sense of the greatest men of the period, like Erasmus and Bacon, dealt it crushing blows.

The other event was the Protestant Reformation. The relation of the reformation to humanism is somewhat complex. In its wilder and iconoclastic manifestations it was the foe of all culture, but the national element in the protest against Rome should not be forgotten. Nationality is allied to secularism, and both are allied to humanism. Further, the method of the schoolmen had a stronger hold in the North, especially in France, the land of its birth, than it had in Italy. There the normal antagonist of humanism was the Sorbonne, and the Sorbonne stood for Catholic theology and the Roman Church. Thus George Buchanan, in temperament much like Erasmus, at any rate untouched by the evangelical fervor of Protestantism, found it natural, not, like Erasmus, to remain in the Roman fold, but with many of his French associates to go over to Protestantism. In Italy this *via media* did not exist. It was humanism and the church, or, for the humanist who did not care for the church, it was humanism and neo-paganism. Now while we must appreciate the great service performed by the Reformation for the humanistic ideal, and admire characters like Melancthon and Zwingli, and not form hasty generalisations on the barrenness of Puritanism when it includes a Milton, we must also

recognize the other half of the truth which I have just suggested—namely, that the exaggerations of the spirit of the Reformation were a blow to culture, and that they must be reckoned as a second force operative against the classics.

From France there proceeded another disturbing influence toward the close of the seventeenth century, the famous *Querelle des anciens et des modernes*. The moderns, whose sentiments first found effective expression in Charles Perrault and his poem on *Le siècle de Louis le Grand* (published 1687), represented a wholesome national and Christian feeling, but committed absurdities both in the defense of their own position and in their attacks on the ancients. The chronological argument loomed large. With centuries of high achievement behind them, why should not the present, profiting by experience, do still greater things? This reasoning seemed convincing, so long as the modern illustrations of superiority were not mentioned; when Chapelain and Desmarets were adduced as such, the proof fell rather flat. For the literary works of the moderns, so far from representing anything of the spirit of romantic revolt, were pseudo-classic in character, and their literary criticism was distinctly pseudo-classic. Virgil came off fairly well at their hands; it was because he stood several centuries nearer modernity than Homer did, and because he was comparatively free from glaring inelegancies. On Homer fell the brunt of their attack; the vulgar characters admitted into his poems, and the indecorous behavior of his nobilities, made him an obvious target for the well-mannered critic of the seventeenth century. The reply of the beleaguered classicists is not particularly significant. Most of them were ready to acknowledge the superiority of Virgil over Homer; in fact it had been accepted ever since Vida and the Renaissance, and most vituperatively proclaimed by the elder Scalinger. Fénélon, it is true, refused to decide between the poets, and Madame Dacier even gave the palm to Homer. But her declaration that nature had exhausted its resources in Homer and had not the power to produce another like him, is of the excessive, pseudo-classic sort of criticism that makes appreciation stagnant.

At all events, the close of the seventeenth century was not

an auspicious epoch for the classics, especially for Greek. Indeed, it would seem that nobody had really entered into the spirit of Greek literature, save possibly the members of the Pleiade in the sixteenth century, since its recovery in the Renaissance. The interrelation of Greek and Latin, the dependency of Latin literature was recognized; Latin is a rivulet, Greek a mighty river, said Erasmus. Ascham laughs at the good bishop who thought the need of the Greek tongue was fulfilled now that everything had been translated into Latin, and compares the Latin scholar without Greek to a bird of one wing. At the same time a remark of his own betrays an intelligence hardly finer than the Bishop's: "And surely," he says, "if Varro's Books had remained to Posterity, as by God's Providence the most part of Tully did, then truly the Latin tongue might have made good comparison with the Greek."

Are we distressed, sometimes, that we live no more in the ages of accepted humanism, and that Greek is going to the wall? We have only to remember that it has seen gloomy days, days of misappreciation, before. Even in the sixteenth century Casaubon could write: I am deep in Athenaeus, and I hope my labor will not be in vain. But one's industry is sadly damped by the reflection how Greek is now neglected and despised. Looking to posterity or the next generation, what motive has one for devotion to study?"

We should take heart of grace, likewise, in recalling that educational follies are not exclusively the product of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Montaigne's father brought him up by the latest pedagogy. "As to Greek," he remarks, "of which I have but a mere smattering, my father also designed to have it taught me by a trick; but a new one, and by way of sport; tossing our declensions to and fro, after the manner of those who, by certain games at tables and chess, learn geometry and arithmetic. For he, amongst other rules, had been advised to make me relish science and duty by an unforced will and of my own voluntary motion." We see that the method of "not teaching but informally introducing" is not the last word of the latest philosophy. In such fear was this good father that he might dis-

turb the brain of his child that in the morning he did not rudely wake him by a shake but had gentle music played to him that the waking might be gradual. This educational scheme did not last very long: the boy was so heavy, idle, and indisposed that, he declares, "they could not rouse me from my sloth, not even to get me out to play." He therefore was sent to school, where the discipline was so strict that he enjoyed reading Ovid on the sly—even as the poet Lowell cut conic sections for a private hour with Aeschylus.

To pass on now to the eighteenth century, we may note pseudo-classic influences in all the countries as a preservative of the humanistic scheme—preserving, embalming it, but not contributing to its growth. In France, especially, Roman Catholic education was closely identified with the Jesuits, who from the end of the sixteenth century had shown that humanism was not the exclusive property of the Reformers, by basing their own instruction upon the classics, particularly the Latin classics. The famous Delphin editions, published toward the close of the seventeenth century for a very indifferent young Dauphin, proved acceptable in many other schools besides those of the Jesuits. The order maintained its prominence in education in the eighteenth century, and has not ceased its activities today. Whatever else may be said of this illustrious company, it is interesting to note that its tremendous missionary undertakings have been the product, or the concomitant, of an educational system that is classical, if not pseudo-classical, in character. England was not influenced vitally by the Jesuits in the eighteenth century, but in its own way maintained the supremacy of the classics. "All the faculties of the mind," remarked Gibbon, "may be exercised by the study of ancient literature." A classical training was firmly believed to be an admirable preparation for political life. Statesmen like Chatham and Fox and Pitt and Burke did not fail to recognize its bearing upon modern problems, or to point an argument with a classical quotation. They were simply continuing the tradition that we have seen before in Bacon, and before him in Vittorino, and before him in Dante.

To England, too, is due a fresh appreciation of ancient litera-

ture for the reason that the meaning of Homer was at last beginning to grow clear. Pope, whatever his offenses, deserves, with Bentley, whom he abused, no small share of the credit, and Blackwell and Wood made further advance. This is a quiet little movement, the approach to romanticism in eighteenth-century England, and a gain for classical education. But the doctrines of Rousseau and the impetus of the French Revolution broke in a romantic storm which in principle carried with it little reverence for antiquity. At the same time it benefited the classics by clearing away false notions of their immaculateness, and by revealing Greek afresh. For the latter event we must be grateful not only to England but to the German school of criticism, inaugurated before the days of Romanticism by Winckelmann, and completed by Lessing, Herder, Schiller, and Goethe. True, in this Teutonic Hellenism there are exaggerations, strange lights that never shone on land or sea, and it led to a dearth in the appreciation of Latin literature in Germany, down till only a few years ago. England took the movement more soberly. Wordsworth, the high priest of nature, could look back to Horace and sigh for

The humblest note of those sad strains,
uttered

As a chance sunbeam from his memory fell
Upon the Sabine farm.

No change in the humanistic ideal was made in the nineteenth century, wherever that ideal was truly interpreted. Arnold of Rugby, who typifies English education at its best, founded his system on the classics. "The study of language," he said, "seems to me as if given for the very purpose of forming the human mind in youth; and the Greek and Latin languages . . . seem the very instruments by which this is to be effected." Arnold was also deeply impressed with the moral inspiration that comes from association with the past, not only with the literature of the past, but with the very buildings in which education has made its home. "There is, or there ought to be," he declares, "something very ennobling in being connected with an establishment at once ancient and magnificent, where . . . all the asso-

ciations belonging to the objects around us, should be great, splendid, and elevating. What an individual ought and often does derive from the feeling that he is born of an old and illustrious race, from being familiar from his childhood with the walls and trees which speak of the past no less than the present, and make both full of images of greatness, this, in an inferior degree, belongs to every member of an ancient and celebrated place of education." Finally, Arnold directed the enthusiasm thus gained from the past upon the immediate present. He writes to a friend: "I cannot deny that you have an anxious duty—a duty which some might suppose was too heavy for your years. But it seems to me the nobler as well as the truer way of stating the case to say, that it is the great privilege of this and other institutions, to anticipate the common time of manhood; that by their whole training they fit the character for manly duties at an age when, under another system, such duties would be impracticable." The classics, he thought, then, so far from abstracting the learner from the present, prepare him more speedily than any other system does for its service.

As we go farther in the nineteenth century, and especially as we come to our own times, we are forced to acknowledge that to many thinkers the classics are no longer an indispensable part of education. The causes of this attitude are not far to seek—romanticism, naturalism, and the breaking-down of authority of all kinds. Germany has contributed largely. Germany rediscovered Greek literature and exterminated Latin. Germany has led the way to the scientific study of the classics, and garnered more results than any other nation. It contributed the philosophy of relativity, which, joining forces with the doctrine of evolution, the product of English science, led to new methods and manifold results in the study of history. But an excessive scrutiny of origins has impaired the efficacy of the classics. The tendency of the historical spirit is to compel illustrious characters of the past to know their place, whereas the Middle Ages and the Renaissance summoned the ancients to transgress their periods—yes, to walk down the centuries and shake hands. A late mediaeval tapestry at Langeais sets forth a goodly troop

of knights, all caparisoned cap-a-pie in the same manner; they are Godfrey of Bouillon, Julius Caesar, Samson, and some others. We shudder when we find the Byzantine chronicler Malalas putting Polybius before Herodotus, or John the Scot setting Martianus Capella in the times of Cicero, but are ourselves inclined to forget that, though history has its periods, the imagination has none. We should encourage it to glorious anachronisms, or rather hyperchronisms, for if it is chronologically fettered the classics become demodernized. A further tendency of historical analysis is to resolve great personalities and traditions into causes and effects. An author is not regarded as an entity unless he is influencing somebody else; when the critics look at him, he disappears in a mist of sources. Let me not be misunderstood. I regard the critical method of the historian as indispensable; but this very method is imperfect if it does not reckon with ethical and imaginative values as well.

But to proceed no further with this arraignment of the age, let me conclude by referring to the hardest problem of all, which has been gradually accumulating for our generation, namely, the presence of various modern literatures of great power and beauty, which were only beginning to exist when the humanists based all teaching on the classics. May not the literature of any of the great nations of Europe serve the purpose as effectively? How can we neglect any of them, and how can we elect? Further, I would inquire, how have we teachers of the classics fulfilled our task? Have we always kept before us the true ideal of humanism? Have we made the sacred past living and contemporary, or have we banished our subject to a timeless district, illumined, not by the dry light of reason, which is a wholesome effluence, but by the dry darkness of the unprofitable? I raise these issues contentedly and bequeath them to the other speakers at this meeting. With many startling leaps down the centuries, and, I fear, with many hasty generalisations, I have at least made clear that the true program of humanism, which is nothing but the ancient program revived, has always pointed men to the treasured ideals of the past and inspired them to action in the present.